

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MILAN 01056 140412Z
ACTION EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6082
AMCONSUL TURIN UNN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMCONSUL FLORENCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1056

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDITIONAL TAGS: ASEC)

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: IT PINT ASEC
SUBJECT: YOUNG POLICE OFFICER ON COSSIGA AND SECURITY

1. ON OCCASION OF VISIT TO MILAN OF COUNSELOR FOR CONSULAR AFFAIRS KELEY, CONSUL GENERAL HOSTED LUNCH INVOLVING DEPUTY CHIEF OF FOREIGNERS' OFFICE OF MILAN POLICE DEPARTMENT (QUESTURA). WE FOUND HIM AND HIS REMARKS SO INTERESTING WE FEEL THEM WORTH REPORTING.

2. OFFICER, ABOUT 35-40, SAID HE HAD COME TO POLICE WORK AS SECOND CAREER AFTER HAVING WORKED TEN YEARS FOR AMERICAN ADVERTISING AGENCY. HE HAD JOINED POLICE OUT OF DESIRE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE.

STARTING FROM BOTTOM VIA NORMAL NATIONWIDE EXAMINATIONS. NOW HE WAS DISAPPOINTED. ALTHOUGH HIS CAREER AFFORDED HIM SATISFACTIONS, THESE TENDED TO BE OUTWEIGHED BY BUREAUCRATIC INERTIA, LOW PAY, OTHER FRUSTRATIONS, AND NOW DANGER. HIS SWEDISH WIFE HAD HAD ENOUGH AND WANTED HIM TO QUIT.

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3. ONE OF HIS DISAPPOINTMENTS INVOLVED FORMER MINISTER OF INTERIOR COSSIGA, ABLE AND FORWARD-THINKING MAN WHO HAD RESIGNED BECAUSE OF POLICE INCAPABILITY HE HAD RECOGNIZED FROM BEGINNING AND HAD WORKED SO HARD TO CORRECT. COSSIGA'S PREDECESSOR GUI' HAD BEEN TRADITIONAL POLITICIAN WHO THOUGHT IN TERMS OF GIVING IMPORTANT JOBS TO THE WELL-CONNECTED AND WAS UNHAPPY WITH

SUBORDINATES WHO ROCKED BOAT BY BRINGING THORNY PROBLEMS TO FORE.
COSSIGA INSTEAD TRIED TO LEARN WHAT REAL, STRUCTURAL WEAK-
NESSES WERE AND TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM.

4. THIS WAS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF POLICE, AND IT WAS IN THIS CONNEC-
TION THAT OFFICER HAD GOTTEN TO KNOW COSSIGA. OFFICER WAS PART OF
POLICE STUDY GROUP FORMED BY GUT' TO IDENTIFY NEEDED IMPROVE-
MENTS. UNDER GUI GROUP REMAINED WINDOW DRESSING. BUT COSSIGA
TOOK IT SERIOUSLY. DURING DOZEN OR SO TIMES THAT OFFICER
AND HIS COLLEAGUES IN GROUP MET IN ROME, COSSIGA WAS OFTEN
PRESENT AND ALWAYS FOLLOWED RESULTS CLOSELY.

5. REVERSE SIDE OF COSSIGA'S INTEREST IN POLICE, EXPLAINED OFFICER
IN REPLY TO QUESTION, WAS NEGLECT OF PREFECTS, WHOM HE FOUND
ANACHRONISTIC. HE ROUTINELY CIRCUMVENTED HIS PREFECTS TO DEAL
DIRECTLY WITH POLICE COMMISSIONERS AND EVEN LOWER LEVEL
POLICE OFFICERS. A RADIO AFFACIONADO, COSSIGA KEPT HIMSELF
INFORMED DURING CRISES BY FREQUENT DIRECT RADIO CALLS TO POLICE
INVOLVED.

6. RIDING BACK INTO TOWN IN CONSUL GENERAL'S CAR AFTER LUNCH,
OFFICER CAST PROFESSIONAL EYE AT CAR'S ARMORING AND EXPRESSED
SURPRISE AT WHAT HE OBVIOUSLY FOUND UNIMPRESSIVE JOB. HE NOTED
WINDSHIELD WAS UNPROTECTED AND DOUBTED THAT SIDE ARMORING WAS
SUFFICIENT. POLICE OFFICIALS WERE NOW BEING GIVEN WELL-ARMORED
VEHICLES. HE HAD RECEIVED ONE RECENTLY. IT WOULD BE WISE, HE SAID,
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TO LET PEOPLE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT AMERICAN CONSUL GENERAL
IN MILAN - WHOM POLICE CONSIDERED SECOND MOST IMPORTANT AMERICAN
OFFICIAL IN ITALY - HAD SERIOUSLY ARMORED CAR AS WELL.FINA

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